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1912

Judea

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A Lowly Study of Earth's Loftiest :: Theme ::

By

H. N. Atkinson

(SECOND EDITION)

PS 3501
T515d
1910

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HORATIO NELSON
ATKINSON

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Author's Note.

THE TYPE with which "JUDEA" is printed was made expressly for this book. These pages are its first impressions.

THE COVER is imported imperial parchment vellum.

THE PAPER is of the finest quality, hand-made and deckle-edged.

"MOSES ON PISGAH" was painted to illustrate the first paragraph on page eight.

"CHRIST BY THE JORDAN" was painted to illustrate the first paragraph on page nine.

EACH OF THESE beautiful pictures is an exact reproduction of the colors of the original, and each has its own message.

"JUDEA" WAS NOT WRITTEN easily, or hastily. It was wrought slowly, grudgingly, painfully, through more than seven years. Ever around the writer were the iron limitations that curb all human speech; ever the waiting for thoughts, unknowing from what source or on what wings they came. Many times it was laid aside in utter weariness, only to be taken up again, at what seemed to be the command of a taskmaster, imperious and invisible, and who would not be denied. Further than this, the text must speak for itself.

OF THE MECHANICAL EXECUTION of the work, the author can only say that he asked Messrs. Rein & Sons Co. for a little volume of dainty and exquisite beauty, something suitable as a gift, at Christmas or Easter, or for Mother, on "Mother's Day." He desires to thank those gentlemen for the care and skill they have shown in complying with his request.

THE AUTHOR.

Houston, Texas, July 1st, 1911.

Moses on Pisgah

(From the original in oil—Painted for "Judea" by
Mrs. Beatrice Lunn of Houston, Texas)

For each must climb Life's Pisgah, till, alone,
with God he stands,
And sees, beyond the River, the lands he
shall not tread;
For each, by gray Beth-peor, in grave not made
with hands,
In place, where none may know, some cherished
dream lies dead.

Christ by the Jordan

(From the original in oil—Painted for "Judea" by
Mrs. Nettie Fisk of Houston, Texas)

If thou hast answered Hate, with message of forgiving,

Hast borne another's burdens, when thy strength was sorely tried,

Hast sought to lift the erring, up to holier heights of living,

Thou hast met and known The Master, Who walked by Jordan's side

H. N. Atkinson.

Dedication

1

These Judean leaves I bring you, Mother, with the folded hands,
Made from Bible lore you taught me, in life's first, sweet years, with thee!
Shall this far-sent message find you, in the timeless Summerlands?
Were you, as of old, beside me, when these whispers came to me?

2

Mother's Day, for mother, dead! And, you died, so long ago!
Never friendship, such as thine, with love, as true as God is true!
On Earth, while life, you gave, endures, and in fair Heavens, I hope to know,
My soul shall wear a memory-crown, gemmed, with jewel-thoughts of you!

3

You told me of the fearless David, as he swung his deadly sling;
Showed me all The Master's sorrows, when He wore His thorny crown;
Made me glad for Lady Esther, when she went before the King;
Shared my pride and grief for Samson, when he tore the temple down.

4

You read of Moses, in The Presence, up behind the clouds and thunder,
Where he saw A Hand Immortal, write, with finger-point of flame;
And of One Who rose to Heaven, while the shrinking world lay under,
When down the star-built stair, to greet Him, troops of deathless angels came.

5

"Now, I lay, me down to sleep," again, with clasping hands, I pray;
Or, I'm listening, in the twilight, with my head upon your knee,
In a cottage, in a May-time, half a hundred years away,—
Just a glory, strayed from Eden, just a memory left to me,
And a White Rose, worn for Mother.

HORATIO.

Houston, Texas,
May 14, (Mother's Day), 1911.

The Argument

Page 1. The Author Expresses his Reverence for the Holy Land.
2. He pays Tribute to the Womanhood of the Old Testament.
2. Reference is made to the Punishment that came on an Unworthy Queen.
3. The Women of the New Testament are praised.
4. Herein of the Warriors of Israel and their desperate Valor.
5. The Wisdom of Israel's Sages.
5. All Laws are based on Sinai's Code.
6. Israel's Poets and their Songs.
7. The Prophets of Israel and their Visions of Heaven.
8. Moses on Pisgah.
8. The Spiritual Significance of the Jordan.
9. Some Glimpses of The Christ.
10. The Growth of Christ's Influence.
10. A Mystery of Old Jerusalem.
11. Of the Causes of the Persecutions of the Jews and the Injustice thereof.
12. Something of the Punishments that came on their Oppressors.
13. The enduring Qualities of the Jewish Race.
13. The Beauty of the Daughters of Israel.
14. Of Mother-Love.
15. The Jew is the World's Merchant and Banker.
15. His Place as a Barrister and Counselor.
16. As a Musician.
17. Somewhat of the Service of a Jew, named Judah P. Benjamin, to the South, in Time of War.
18. Of two Certain Jew Dreamers and One was Prime Minister of Egypt and the other Prime Minister of the British Empire.
19. The Temporal Glories of Israel have perished; his Spiritual Glories remain.
20. The Author recognizes the Evanescence of This Work, as compared with the Immortality of the Bible.
20. Every Place of Worship is of Kin to Solomon's Temple and a Dwelling Place for The Most High.
21. Bible Influence in our Daily Life.
22. To the Glory, Mercy and Power of God.
23. He is from Everlasting to Everlasting.
24. Of the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Dispersal of the Jews.
25. Some Mention of their Former Spirituality and Present Materialism.
26. A Prayer that the Persecutions of the Jews shall cease, for their Return to Palestine,
27. And for Peace, Righteousness and Salvation.

Judea

By H. N. Atkinson

O, Storied Land, that bears the name of him,
Before whose face his father's children bowed;
I, mindful of the thoughtless fate of one,
Who touched God's ark, with all unworthy hands,
Bring this, my rev'rent tribute, to thy shrine.
Thy leagues are few, between thy widest bounds,
And small thy space upon the world's great globe,
Yet, not the widest empires that have been,
Hold griefs and glories such as thou hast known.

Thy pictured scroll has forms, most wondrous fair,
Who dwelt in those far yesterdays of thine,
Serving in tender minist'ries of life;
Foremothers, they, of prophets, priests and kings,
Whose words and deeds are told at parents' knees,
And hold the thoughts of wise men, old and gray,
In every land beneath the arching sky.

Dreaming her maiden dreams of days to be,
Dark-eyed Rebecca waits beside the well,
And greets love's messenger, from far away;
She rides with him, into the stranger lands,
To meet a husband and the bridal morn,
Returning to her father's house, no more.

And she, first loved and latest won of him,
First called of God to bear proud Israel's name;
The gentle Rachel, shepherding her flock,
Thro' the long service of twice seven years,
And who, her latest earthly wish denied,
Was made a wayside grave by Bethlehem,
Still holds our hearts, in life and love and death.

All unforgotten, stands the faithful Ruth,
The patient gleaner of the harvest field,
The weary toiler 'mid the standing sheaves,
Whose head was pillowed on the threshing floor,
Who spoke all time's supremest words of love,
And beggared every wooer's after speech,

There, too, are seen those iron-hearted dames,
Stern ladies of the hammer and the sword,
Fierce Jael and Judith, deadlier than Death,
In vengeance, on their country's foes, who slept.

And still, are traced, outlined in darker shades,
Foul Ahab's queen, whose name stains all thy years;
Poor Naboth's blood, lapped up by hungry dogs,
The stolen vineyard and Jehovah's wrath.

Yet, when Earth's Kingliest One went forth to die,
No woman's lips flung down the cruel jibe,
No woman's hand laid on the shameful lash,
Or pressed the woven thorns upon His brow,
Or drove the nails thro' shrinking hands and feet,
Or thrust the spear into the bleeding side
Of Him, by man denied, by man betrayed.

Most beautiful, in Faith and Love, were they,
The last to leave Their Dead, when day was done,
The first, to meet the morning, by His grave,
And greet the guarding Angel, watching there.

Before thy Strong Man, clad in battle's rage,
The alien armies flee and fall and die.
His babbling lips are won, by Beauty's spell,
He softly sleeps on fair Delilah's knee,
And all his strength is sweetly shorn away.
With blinded eyes, he toils at menial tasks,
Until his locks of strength are grown once more,
Then, rends the rock-built temple's pillars down,
And dies, amidst his foes in thousands slain,
Wreaking a vengeance worthy of a god.

Thy fair-haired boy, who left his father's flocks,
And stalked, unfearing, 'mid the armed men;
Who plucked a stone from out a wayside brook,
And laid Philistia's giant Champion low,
Still nerves the weaker arm to win the fight,
And aids the Right to thrust the Wrong aside.

Thro' clouds, that darken 'round thy distant past,
Still cleaves the light'ning flash of Gideon's sword,
And, rolling down the stream of time, we hear,
The thunders of thy captains, in the wars.

At their command, the coursers of the sun
Stayed in their headlong flight, across the sky.
In Ajalon's vale, the unresting moon was still,
While far, o'er Gibeon's plain, the battle raged.
And there was clash of sword and loosened bows,
While all the field was rife with stabbing spears,
With shouts of conquest and with dying moans,
As strong men's lives leaped forth thro' gaping wounds.
And, when Earth's longest day was changed to night,
Far fled in flight, or still, in pulseless death,
Was every foe that faced the morning's fray.

For thou hadst warriors, brave as Earth has borne,
Since primal man first strove with primal man
For mast'ry of blood-sodden fields of death;
Or shall bear, till the years of strife are done,
And all the dev'lish enginery of war,
Reforged to nobler use, in kindlier fires,
Shall plow and reap the harvests of the world,
And every race dwell in white tents of peace,

When doubts and fears along Life's path arise,
And misty lines divide the False and True,
The wisdom of thy sages guides us still,
And leads us on, thro' safe and prosp'rous ways,
To where, beyond the night, Truth's morning shines.

As Earth's high councils meet in splendid halls,
To higher build the fabrics of their laws,
Each statute, framed in truth and righteousness,
Has Sinai's Code for deep foundation stones
And bears upon its crest the Golden Rule.

Thy poets trod on star-crowned heights of song;
Their swelling diapason grandly sweeps,
Full organ-voiced, adown the aisles of Time,
The highest strain that mortal lips have sung.

Thro' eyes that saw the day-spring's crescent flame,
Ere yet the years, in thousands, drifted by,
We see Grief's tears, on cold, dead faces fall;
We see the fadeless glow of Sharon's rose,
The pure white lilies bloom in lowly lands,
The mellow lights that fall at even time,
And all the beauties of that younger world;
While borne upon their winged words we hear
The songs of birds, when winter's reign is done,
The lover's call unto his waiting love,
The victor's hymn, 'mid his triumphant spears,
The joyous laughter of the sons of God,
The wordless music of the morning stars.

Thy prophets walked with That High, Changeless One,
To Whom all Past and Future are but Now;
They saw, far down, thro' thrice a thousand years,
The visions that these latter days fulfill.

They pass the vale, whereon Death's shadow lies,
And lean, unfearing, on An Arm That guides.
They rend the fetters of the Grave,—and climb;—
They use the high, white stars for stepping stones—
For them the amethystine gates unbar;
For them the finished course, the victor's crown,
The clasping hands of loved ones waiting there.

The balm of leaves from Life's unwithered tree,
Heals ev'ry hurt from olden grief and pain,
And clad in garments wrought in heavenly looms,
They wander free, thro' groves of Paradise.

Their paths lead on by that immortal stream
Whose living springs are 'neath the Throne of God.
Before them spreads afar, that Shining Sea,
With rippling waves, as mingled glass and fire;
While all the glories of the Nightless Land
Are round them in That Viewless Presence, where
The Great Archangels veil their flaming eyes.

Of old, upon a mountain crest, once stood
Thy Prophet-Chief and saw, unrolled afar,
Across thy Jordan's stream, the Promised Land.
One first, last glimpse he had, then turned away,
To find a grave, not made by mortal hands,
Unseen by human eye forevermore.

Brief is its course, adown its rocky path,
From Hermon's height to Galilean Sea,
Whose fishers' nets are spread so wide today;
And downward, still, to that grim Lake of Death,
The lowest wave that mocks the pitying stars,
Yet rolls above the cities of the plain,
And hides curst Sodom from the eye of God.

A narrow stream, scarce more than rivulet;
No sea-borne commerce moves along its breast,
No barges plow its waves. A little child
Might ford its waters on a summer day;
But in the thoughts that sway the souls of men,
It flows between the lands of Doubt and Faith,
It rolls between the worlds of Life and Death,
It sweeps between the bounds of Earth and Heaven,
And dwarfs the mighty Amazons of Time.

There walked the feet of Thy Mysterious Son,
Pale Sorrow's Child, Who knew the Ways of Grief;
Whose dead hand reaches from His crucifix,
To close its grasp 'round all this waiting world.

He hated those who trampled on the poor,
And loathed the men whose lives were living lies.
From speech, with warp as viper's fangs that stung,
And woof, as searing threads of living fire,
He made them robes of endless infamy,
And set them in the world's chief place of shame,
High pilloried forever.

In kindled wrath
And with a triple scourge of knotted cords,
From out the Temple of The Most High God,
Sternly, He lashed the money changers forth.

Yet little children came and clung to Him;
His pity fell, as soft as Hermon's dews,
On all the weak and erring sons of men.
For those who wore sweet woman's gentle form,
No word of chiding in His voice was heard;
For them, was His divinest courtesy.
And one there was, who, strayed in ways aside,
As some bright bird that left her leafy home,
To trail her plumes in low and miry ways,
Was haled before Him by revengeful men.
He searched their hearts with keen and biting words,
Until, abashed, they from His presence crept,
And, when the trembling culprit stood alone,
On her bowed head, His words of mercy fell,
And bade her go, in peace, and sin no more.
First Knight of God, Unmatched in chivalry,
He died, with all forgiveness on His lips!

The shameful cross, whereon His spirit passed,
Is grown the proudest badge that mortals wear;
While that sharp crown that mocked His tortured brow,
Outshines all diadems of gems and gold.
In life, so poor He owned no resting place,
Yet Earth is filled with temples to His praise;
He went to death, a thief on either hand,
And marshalled millions fought to win His grave.

And lo! A wondrous thing appears to me,
Like that strange dream the great Ezekiel saw,
A vision that I may not understand.
Christ's standard floats above imperial Rome,
But halts outside of Old Jerusalem.
Bides she, alone, till He appear again,
Or, waits the Bride for Shiloh yet to come?

For there had won to thee, from Tiber's side,
The she-wolf's brood, that bore the brand of Cain,
And brought the Cross, Rome's hateful gallows-tree,
A thing, in all thy land, unknown before.

They charged The Christ that He would be thy King
To free thy land from Caesar's iron sway,
And wear the kingly crown that David wore.
By Roman Laws, in Roman Court, 'twas tried,
And there, a Roman judge pronounced His doom.
By Roman thorns and lash and nails and spear
And on a Roman Cross His Soul was sped,
And, for the poor, worn garb that wrapped His form,
The Roman dice, by Roman hands, were thrown.

Then, cruel Pilate, with his crafty smile,
Did call for water, when the deed was done,
Washed from his hands the blood of innocence,
And charged that crime upon thy helpless race.

And that foul seed, sown in the soil of Time,
Has grown for thee, its wormwood harvestings
Of hate and shame and tears and agony,
Thy Sisyphean reapings have not reaped,
In all the ages that have come between.
Its upas bloom still poisons fairest lands,
Its crimson fruit stains Russia's bloody snows;
It spares not manhood's prime nor whitened age,
And dooms thy feeble little ones to die.

What heaped up wrongs the slow years piled on thee,
Only Thy Sleepless God, Who guards, may know;
And yet without or lifted voice or hand,
Such glut of awful vengeance has been thine,
As makes a Nero's rage a benison.

As when the foemen bore thine Ark away,
To rest in Ashdod by false Dagon's side,
And found the torments of strange plagues had come,
Thy robes of faith, remade by Gentile hands,
And worn by those, slow groping to the light,
Were Nessean garments, mad'ning down to Death.
The torches, kindled at thine altar fires,
Were flung as flaming brands about the world,
While far and wide, War's dragon teeth were sown,
And armed men sprang up to meet the strife.
Mohamet's hordes rode from Arabian sands,
In Allah's holy name, to slay and slay;
And deeds were done, for love of Loving Christ,
To flush a pale arch-devil's cheek with shame.

And though, in many lands their homes are made,
As that strange form of life that takes the hues
Of ev'ry tree and rock whereon it rests,
And yet remains, forevermore unchanged,
They wear such garb as those with whom they dwell,
They learn to think and speak in alien tongues,
And yet are they great Abram's children still.

Thy daughters still are fair to look upon,
As she, whose witching loveliness was seen,
At eve, in stolen glances of a king;
Or she, the captive maid, of long ago,
Whose beauty won a place on Persia's throne;
They hold each charm of gracious womanhood,
With mother-love, as true as her's, bereaved,
Who wept in Rama, all uncomforted.

For, when The Master-Workman made the world,
And all its new-born beauties 'round Him lay,
Ere yet had come the Sabbath of His toil,
He left the holiest gate of Heaven, ajar,
And Mother-Love, the tenderest thought of God,
Came down, to nestle in a woman's heart,
And link all life together, through the years.

From his first breath, until her days are done,
He needs no poppied balm to bind his wounds,
No dull nepenthe, drawn from Lethe's shores,
Who can return to her, who loved him first,
And, in his griefs, have comfort, from his mother.

The eagle-faces of thine eager sons
Throng late and early in the marts of trade;
Their grasp is on the treasure of the world,
And thro' their hands Earth's streams of gold are poured;
For, softly, on their finger tips, is laid,
The Midas-touch, beyond alchemist's dreams,
And, unto them the kings of earth must come,
And bring the bonds, those yet unborn shall pay,
Ere shot is fired, or sword is drawn, in war.

Beneath the domes, where courts of law are met,
And dramas played, beyond the mimic stage,
Where he, who wins, may still the loser be,—
Where Wrong comes forth in robes of innocence
And wand'ring Right is lost, in maze of rules,
With comedies to wreath the lips in smiles,
Or tragedies that eat the heart away,
'Mid clash of thought on thought, as steel on steel,
Thy barristers have won to place as high
As youthful Daniel, of that elder time,
Who came into the judgment-hall of Death,
The sentence passed, the victim waiting there,
Who wrung reluctant Truth from lying lips,
And saved the life, by Falsehood sworn away,

To music's halls they hold the master-key,
And all its strains come forth at their commands.

They take the laughter, flung from childish lips,
Ere yet the years and cares have marred its tones;
The sighs of mothers, who, with empty hands,
Bend over graves of little babes that died;
Dear whispers, heard in fragrant dusks of June,
When Youth and Love go down the quiet ways;
The plash of oars, on magic boats, that glide,
Up moon-paths, laid on waters, lone and still;
The rustling of Life's curtains, stirred in dreams,
By breath of longings for all holy things;
And weave them into melodies, as sweet,
Of cadence low, and soft crescendoes made,
As came to Eve, across the guarded gate,
Borne outward, past the turning sword of flame,
That ever-more denied her entrance there.

A garland for the grave of him, thy son,
Who sleeps in that fair city by the Seine,
Our Southland's off'ring, on this page, I bring.
He wrought for her, in that sword-mangled time,
When all her vines bore fruit of wounds and death,
Her tears of grief made bitter harvestings,
And she, the cruel wine-press, trod alone.

His story thrills across the work-day world,
As wild romance, told in Arabian Nights.
As great in counsel as was Lee in fight,
His was the arm on which our Davis leaned,
From that bright day, that hid Fate's stern decree,
When Sumpter's wall, through cannon smoke was dim,
To that dark hour, that saw a nation die,
When Appomattox sheathed a stainless sword.

And, when the high-borne stars and bars went down,
Never again to float o'er field or flood,
Scorning to dwell beneath the victor's flag,
His free soul, ranging masterless, went forth,
From exile into exile, old and poor,
To win new fortunes 'mid the London throngs,
And added fame, to crown his crown of fame.

'Twas his to fill again the thin gray lines,
That thinner grew, beneath the leaden rain;
To gather food from fields that ceased to bear,
And arms for fight, where there were none to send;
But day by day, so well was duty done,
Each measure, heaped and pressed and running o'er,
That, till the South forgets her battle years,
And holds no mem'ry of her faithful dead,
She keeps the name of knightly Benjamin,
Enshrined beside the knightly name of Lee.

And now, our thoughts span all the years that reach
From Joseph to D'Israeli, and their dreams.

By firesides, round the world, the tale is told,
Of him, the youth from prison walls, who came,
And dreamed the way to stand by Pharoah's throne,
And guide a Nation through the famished years,
When clouds came not, nor was there rain nor dew,
And Father Nile forgot his time of flood.
Yet was there corn in Egypt.
It was told
In far off Canaan, where his brothers dwelt,
With starving flocks, beside their withered fields.
By desert trails, thro' weary lands, they came,
With gold and silver in their hands, to buy,
And found the prince, whom they had sold a slave.

Crowned with the blessing of his dying sire,
Beyond the everlasting hills is spread
The fame of him, first exile of thy race.

And he, that other, of thine exiles born,
By dreams and toil that ripens dreams to truth,
Arose to stand beside Earth's mightiest throne,
Chief guide and counsel to an Empress-Queen,
And sway the broadest empire man has made,
A realm that ever greets the circling morn,
That far outspreads the widest wings of Night,
And, mid vast sweep of isles and continents,
Grasps Pharoah's kingdom, as a little thing.

And when, in death, his dreams and work had closed
So well he'd ruled and served their viking brood,
With peace and honor plucked from edge of war,
The stern, proud masters of the seven seas,
In Fame's Valhalla, gladly made him room,
And welcome place, amid their mighty dead;
Safe gathered up, into the changeless past,
Israel's and England's, till this world is done.

In all the regions round the oceans' shores,
No foot of soil now owns Judea's sway;
No flag of thine floats over land or sea,
'Neath all the bending blue. Thy ships no more,
Bearing the wealth of Sidon and of Tyre,
Sail forth, beyond the misty Western isles,
Or come, from Tarshish, home. But on the realms,
That hold the unseen kingdom of the soul,
How proudly rests thy crown! Thy throne is built,
High o'er the empire of the minds of men;
And steadfast stands, 'mid all the changing years.
Above the fleets of thought-built argosies,
Thy banners flame, as in the olden days,
And David's shield, undimmed by war or time,
Still fronts the light, where e'er thy temples rise.

While this frail bark built by these weaker hands,
Of flotsam, drifted from thy sacred shores;
From Jordan's banks and coasts of Galilee,
And Joppa, where thy ships their haven made,
May float upon Time's ocean for a day,
And then sink down, beyond the reach of thought,
To low, dim regions of forgotten things,
So long as Day-Star rides before the Dawn
Or Ev'ning troops her colors round the West,
These spoken thoughts, from holy men of old,
These far-flung glories, from thy splendid years,
Shall light the upward path that leads to Him,
Whom we adore, Our Father and Our God.

The lowly roof, where, by country lanes,
A toil-worn few, may meet for words of praise;
The tall, cathedral spire, that mid the throngs,
Looks down on arches, bent o'er aisles of prayer,
Are spirit kin to that high, wondrous fane,
Thy Wise King builded on the Mount of God,
And each becomes a dwelling place for Him,
Whose Home in all the boundless Heavens is made,
Yet comes, with gifts of Faith and Hope and Love,
To comfort those who gather in His Name.

Thy words are woven in our earliest speech;
In Life, they come as sun-light and the breeze;
They thrill above the low, baptismal font,
And softly breathe the marriage vows that bind;
They tremble on our latest falt'ring breath;
O'er open graves their mournful splendors pour.
They lift tear-blinded eyes, beyond the tomb,
To That Bright Land, where many mansions be.
A thousand ways, Earth's wearied children climb,
Thro' sects and creeds, that sever man from man,
To scale the skies, where Those High Portals are,
And every way draws all its light from Thee.
We crown Thy Virgin, Queen of Earth and Heaven,
And hail Thy Christ as being One with God.

Through Thee, to mortal minds, was first revealed,
Some far, faint glimpse of That Eternal One,
Who sends the Spring Time and the Harvest down,
With treasures of the sunshine and the rain,
And all the beauties of the changing year;
Who tints the petals of the op'ning rose,
And paints the sun-set's glories on the sky.

He spoke: And lo, from out the ancient void,
The sun of day in all its light shone forth,
With this, our earth, whereon through space we ride,
And all her sister worlds that gem the night.

As pollened bees flit on, from bloom to bloom,
His far-sent comets blaze athwart the sky,
Bearing the seeds of life from world to world,
To flower and fruit, in times and ways unknown.

He loosed the sweet influence of Pleiades
And girded on Orion's shining bands;
He guides Canopus on his mighty path
And leads Arcturus with his sons to war.
He moulds the whirling star-dust into stars,
And strews the Universe with blazing suns,
With circling planets for the homes of life,
His power is shown, beyond the out-post fires
That guard His far domains from farthest Night;
His mercy glows in every blade of grass
That spreads the low green carpet at our feet.

He *was*, ere yet Duration's self had place,
Or ere the first eternities began,
In far, white splendors, round His Central Throne!
He *shall be*, when the Scroll of Time is read,
And all the last eternities are done;
Yet cares for us, frail children of a day,
And feeds the youngling ravens, when they cry.

The Gods of Greece are mid Earth's vanished dreams,
Gone is the shrine of Capitolian Jove,
Dark Isis reigns no more along the Nile,
And Moloch's fires are dead and dead his priests,
But Israel's God is God forevermore.

Egypt and Babylon have conquered thee,
And Rome hath battered down thy walls of pride.
The fell barbarians swept thy land with fire,
They harvested thy sons with crimsoned swords,
And sold thy daughters down to nameless shame.
On willows far, thy people's harps are hung,
By far-off streams thy scattered children wail,
A homeless race amid the sons of men.
Thy head is bowed beneath an alien yoke,
The Moslem's heel is on thy land today;
And where God's Temple lifted marble walls,
And flung the sun-beams from its roofs of gold,
The base-born Janizaries flout thy name,
And ragged beggars spurn thy sacred dust.

Upon the stone that seals thy Nation's tomb,
In deep'ning folds, the centuries are laid.
In Earth's far ends thy steadfast children wait,
With faith as changeless as thy granite hills,
'Till they shall hear thy Shiloh's Zionward call;
When by thy feet Thy Great Lawgiver stands,
And Judah's hosts shall have their own once more;
When years have drawn the Future's veil aside,
And Time unfolds the purposes of God.

But, O, thy changeless faith bears fruit, no more,
Save bitter husks, for thy starved spirit's need;
And, all untrod those Heights of Righteousness,
Whereon thy seers and great ones dwelt, of old.
Below them, raged the thunder storms of sin;
The Tempter's lurings beckoned from afar,
Nor stain of wrong was on their garments found.
They heard the uttered speech of day to day,
Proud chantings to the glory of Our God;
To them, from night to night, was knowledge shown,
Dim wisdom, never garnered into words.

Above them, at The Great Commander's will,
The starry hosts in stately squadrons wheeled,
In onward march to far infinities,
Along the trackless paths His hands have made,
While, linking earth to unseen spirit worlds,
High o'er them sprang those ladders, built of light,
Whereon the feet of angels went and came.

Far, far below, where cloud and mountain meet,
And groveling on the ground, I see thee bowed,
With bended knees and forehead prone in dust,
Before the gods of gold thy hands have made;
And cast aside the manna sent from heaven,
For Egypt's flesh-pots and its herbs are sweet.

To darkened chambers of thy prison house
Of bondage unto dead, material things,
What Moses comes to rend thy chains away,
Or lead thee up unto what promised land?

Beneath the Cherubim's wide-brooding wings
Shekinah's awful presence comes no more.
Behind the veil thine oracles are dumb,
And altar, veil and temple—all are gone,
And gone the dreams, with tidings from On High,
The visions gone, that showed the ways to God;
And mourning all thy evil days that come
With lifted hands, I raise this prayer for thee:

Oh, Great Jehovah, Thou, Who from of old,
Wast Israel's Guide, in pillared cloud and fire;
Who builtst the wat'ry walls, on either hand,
And ledst his feet, dry-shod, across the sea;
Who smot'st fell Sennacherib, in his pride,
And drav'st his shattered hosts, as withered leaves
Are hurled before the storm-wind's master breath,
Raise up Thy fallen children once again,
And be to them Their Falchion and Their Shield.

The barbed and poisoned shafts of Hate and Wrong
Wherewith the archers long have grieved them sore,
Turn Thou, O God, aside.
Lift up their hearts,
From love of cold and base material things,
And lead their thoughts again to love of Thee.

And when the fullness of the years has come,
The years, so vast to us, so brief to Thee,
From outmost isles and countries, strange and far,
May Israel's race, returned, once more abide
Within their father's land, of long ago.
Feed them on spirit corn and wine and oil,
And grapes of Eschol, purpling in the suns
That shine on hills and vales of Palestine.
Give them again, the vision and the dream
That Daniel knew in Babylonian lands,
Or Jacob saw, where Egypt's river flows,
When, looking down, thro' all the years to be,
He called his sons around his couch of death.

Teach them that not from oft' repeated words,
Shall rise the worship pleasing unto Thee;
That lives of those who come to do Thy will,
Are loftiest temples, builded in Thy praise;
That, as of old, the broken, contrite heart
Is noblest off'ring, on Thine altars laid;
That still, the kindly deed, in kindness done
Makes sacrificial incense, sweeter far,
Than myriad censers swung by priestly hands.

Bring down the years of peace that wait on high,
And speed the time when nations war no more.
Hasten the days, when deeds of righteousness
Shall clothe the earth, as waters clothe the sea,
And none destroy and none shall make afraid,
In all the holy mountains of Thy world.

And when the things of Time and Change are gone,
And all this firmament has rolled away,
As broken garments, that are laid aside,
Made white from every stain of earth and sin
And saved in the forgiveness of Thy love,
May Jew and Gentile gather Home to dwell,
In yon Fair City Thou hast built On High,
That, lighted with the glory of Thy smile,
Knows not the darkness of the dreadful night,
And needs not sun, nor moon, nor stars.

—Amen.

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